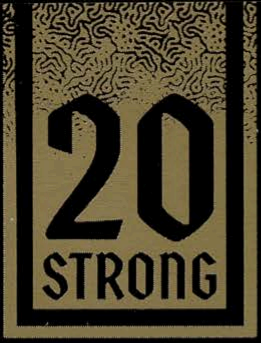

GENERAL RULES OF PLAY

version 1.0

In ***20 Strong***, you and 20 dice take on different challenges represented by a deck of cards. Different decks present diverse situations and obstacles, providing a unique gameplay experience that varies vastly from deck to deck.

©2023 All Rights Reserved Chip Theory Games

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Winning & Losing	4
Components	4–9
Rules	4–5
Decks	5–6
Unit Dice and Stat Dice	6–9
Chip	9
Setup	9
Game Flow	10–16
Activation	10–11
Engagement	11
Strategy Phase	12–14
Resolve Phase	15–16
Endgame	16–17
Rewards	18–19
Enemy Effects	19–20
Reward/Effect Clarifications	20–21
Key Terms	21–24
Universal Heroes	24–25
Icons	28

WINNING & LOSING

WINNING. Generally, you win ***20 Strong*** by defeating a boss. Each deck has specific rules for achieving victory.

LOSING. If your Health ♥ is ever reduced below 1, you lose the game.

COMPONENTS

This ***20 Strong*** core box contains 20 dice, one chip and chip holder, this rulebook, and a deckbox containing the ***Solar Sentinels*** rules and deck. In order to play ***20 Strong***, you will need this core box and any ***20 Strong*** deck.

RULES

This ruleset goes over the general rules that apply to every game of ***20 Strong***. Each deck

also has its own set of rules that supplement these rules. If two rules ever contradict each other, a deck's specific rules take precedence over these general rules. Card text takes precedence over the rules in either rulebook, and effect text takes precedence over reward or hero ability text. The word "may" indicates that the text is optional. If two things would resolve at the same time, you choose the order in which they resolve.

DECKS

Each game uses only the cards from a single deck. Decks generally consist of three types of cards:

- **HEROES** are the characters you play as. They define your starting stats and grant a unique ability.

- **Bosses** are the final enemies you must defeat in order to win.
- **Conflict cards** are the enemies or obstacles you must face along the way.

UNIT DICE

17 of the dice in ***20 Strong*** are **UNIT DICE**. Unit dice can be red, purple, blue, green, or yellow. Each has **MISS** sides that are blank and **HIT** sides showing one of two hit icons: either a **BASIC HIT** or a **CRIT**. All the dice of the same color have the same sides.

Miss

Basic Hit

Crit

Generally, hits on unit dice are assigned to enemies to deal **DAMAGE** to them. A basic hit deals 1 damage, and a crit deals 2 damage.

Note that while a crit deals 2 damage, it is still considered to be one hit.

Units with fewer hit sides are **WEAKER**, and dice with more hit sides are **STRONGER**.

	WEAKER «				» **STRONGER**
COLOR	Yellow	Green	Blue	Purple	Red
QTY	4	4	4	4	1
HITS	2	3	4	5	6
CRITS	1	1	1	1	1
MISSES	4	3	2	1	0

STAT DICE

Three of the dice in ***20 Strong*** are **STAT DICE**.

HEALTH

STRATEGY

RECOVERY

Each is a gray numbered die (**D6**) with a distinct icon. Your hero card will indicate the starting values for these stats.

- The **HEALTH** ♥ stat die tracks how much damage you can take before you lose the game.
- The **STRATEGY** ■ stat die indicates two things:
  - » how many items you can hold.
  - » how many times you can go through the Strategy phase each round.

- The **RECOVERY** ⬇ stat die tracks how many exhausted dice you can get back each round.

Stat dice are never rolled. They cannot be reduced below 1 (except Health ♥, which results in game loss) or increased above 6, and any effect or reward that would do so is ignored.

CHIP

The included chip is used differently depending on which deck you play.

SETUP

Choose a single deck from your collection to play and follow the setup instructions in that deck's rulebook.

GAME FLOW

20 Strong is played in rounds. Each round, you identify one or more conflict cards to face, roll dice, make a series of decisions, and deal with the results. Rounds continue until you win or lose.

Each round has two parts: **ACTIVATION** and **ENGAGEMENT**.

ACTIVATION

In this part, one or more conflict cards become active.

Most decks will require you to assemble **STACKS** of conflict cards as part of setup. Choose the top card from one of the stacks and **ACTIVATE** it by placing it in the active area.

Most enemies have effects on them, many of which begin affecting gameplay during

Activation. **DURING** ○ and **SPECIAL** ✪ effects apply as soon as the card is activated.

The **ADDITIONAL ENEMIES** + 💀 icon is also on several enemies and applies during Activation, though it is not an effect. After activating an enemy with + 💀, activate additional enemies equal to the number indicated, one at a time. If any of those enemies have + 💀, they must be resolved as well.

ENGAGEMENT

Engagement consists of two phases: the Strategy phase, where you commit, roll, and apply dice to active conflict cards; and the Resolve phase, where you suffer damage and negative effects, exhaust and recover dice, and gain items as rewards.

STRATEGY PHASE

The Strategy phase has three steps. You may be able to repeat the phase, carrying out its steps again.

1. COMMIT DICE. The first step of the Strategy phase is to **COMMIT** dice, which entails selecting the dice from the dice pool that you would like to use for this Strategy phase. Generally, you may commit any number and combination of dice from your dice pool, up to and including all of them. Place committed dice in your active area.

2. ROLL DICE. Roll all of the dice in your active area at once. Items cannot be used during this step.

3. APPLY DICE. You may **APPLY** hits to active cards – most commonly enemies – to deal damage to them. Hits are applied one at a

time, in any order, and you are not required to apply all rolled hits.

Each time you apply a die, check to see if the state of play has changed. This most commonly happens when the amount of damage on a conflict card equals or exceeds its Health, at which point it is **DEFEATED**. Any During effects on active cards cease as soon as their conflict card is defeated. You may continue to apply hits to cards even after they have been defeated if you wish.

When a card is defeated, rotate it sideways to track its state. If that card has an **INSTANT REWARD** ✦, gain the reward immediately upon defeat. Gaining the reward is optional. **ITEM REWARDS** (those labeled ⋎ or ∞) are not gained at this time.

Dice that are applied to cards are still considered to be committed and in the active area.

REPEATING THE STRATEGY PHASE

After the Apply Dice step, if your Strategy ■ stat is higher than 1, you may repeat the Strategy phase again. The total number of times you may go through the Strategy phase (including the first) cannot exceed your ■.

Each repeat is considered a new Strategy phase within the same engagement.

When you repeat the Commit Dice step in a subsequent Strategy phase, you may commit additional dice from the dice pool, adding them to any unapplied dice still in your active area. You then roll *all* unapplied dice and apply the dice you wish to apply.

RESOLVE PHASE

The Resolve phase is where the consequences of your rolls are realized. It has six steps.

1. SUFFER DAMAGE. Add together the Damage stats of all undefeated conflict cards in your active area, and reduce your Health ♥ stat die by the total.

2. AFTER EFFECTS. All **AFTER EFFECTS** » in the active area (*including* those on defeated enemies) are resolved, one at a time.

3. EXHAUST DICE. Move *all* committed dice, whether applied or not, to your **EXHAUSTED AREA**, a section of the table where you can keep them separate from other dice.

4. RECOVER DICE. Choose a number of exhausted dice up to the number showing on your Recovery ⬇ stat die. Move them from your exhausted area to your dice pool.

5. Gain Item Rewards. If any of the conflict cards you defeated this round has an item reward, either **Single-use** ⮟ or **Ongoing** ∞, you may gain the item by placing its card in your inventory.

6. Cleanup. Place all conflict cards that remain in your active area – both defeated AND undefeated – in the **DISCARD**.

Now you're ready for the next round.

ENDGAME

The trigger for beginning the endgame differs by deck. In general, the endgame consists of facing a boss, and defeating this enemy results in game victory.

In the endgame, you continue to face the boss (and any other enemies that come with it) each round until you defeat the boss and

win or until your ♥ is depleted and you lose. Unless stated otherwise, only the boss must be defeated, even if there are other active enemies. Endgame rounds are played like normal rounds, with the following exceptions:

- **Skip Activation.** For the first Activation of endgame, the deck will contain instructions regarding selecting a boss to activate and what other conflict cards to activate, if any. Skip Activation in all subsequent rounds.
- **Undefeated Cards Remain.** In the Cleanup step during the endgame, do not discard conflict cards that have not yet been defeated. They remain active and must be faced again in the next round. Dice applied to these undefeated cards are exhausted in the Exhaust Dice step as normal.

REWARDS

There are two types of rewards in *20 Strong*.

- **INSTANT REWARDS** ✦ take effect immediately when the conflict card they are printed on is defeated.
- **ITEM REWARDS** are gained during the Gain Item Rewards step and are held in your inventory. Single-use ⮟ items may be used once for the benefit printed on them and are then discarded. Ongoing ∞ items have a persistent effect until the end of the game or until discarded. Unless they specify timing, items can be used at any time except during the Roll Dice step. You may discard items at any time.

The number showing on your Strategy stat die limits the number of item rewards you can hold in your inventory at any given time. Rewards are gained one at a time. You cannot gain a reward if you do not have room for it in your inventory. However, you may use items you already hold at this time, or discard them, to make room in your inventory. You cannot use items you have yet to gain.

ENEMY EFFECTS

There are three types of enemy effects in *20 Strong*:

- **DURING EFFECTS** have an ongoing impact that applies from the time the conflict card becomes active until the time it is defeated.

- **AFTER EFFECTS** trigger during the Resolve phase. All active conflict cards trigger their after effects if they have them, even if those cards are defeated.
- **SPECIAL EFFECTS** define their own timing and length of impact. Similar to After effects, Special effects trigger even if the card they are on is defeated.

REWARD/EFFECT CLARIFICATIONS

- When a card is discarded, banished, or otherwise removed from the active area, all dice applied to that card are exhausted.
- Effects and rewards that change the damage a die deals also impact dice already applied. However, once an enemy

is defeated, it remains defeated even if the damage on it changes.

KEY TERMS

Active Area, Activate, Active: The active area is where cards and dice are placed so you can interact with them. Cards are activated by moving them from the stacks to the active area. This occurs during Activation, which is the first part of each round. Dice are moved into the active area during the Commit Dice step, which is the first step of the Strategy phase. Cards and dice in the active area are considered to be active.

Apply, Applied, Unapplied: You apply dice when you place them on cards that are in the active area. Only dice that are in the active area and have not already been applied to

cards can be applied. Dice are applied during the Apply Dice step, which is the third step of the Strategy phase. Dice that are within the active area that are on cards are applied. Dice that are within the active area but are not on cards are unapplied.

Banished: When a component is banished, it is removed from the game and can no longer be used. Unless specified, a die being banished can be taken from any area.

Commit, Committed: You commit dice when you move them from the dice pool into the active area. This happens during the Commit Dice step, which is the first step of the Strategy phase. Any dice residing in your active area are committed. This includes dice that are applied to active cards and those that are unapplied.

Conflict: A conflict occurs anytime enemies are activated. In most cases, a conflict lasts one Engagement. However, in endgame, or in decks where you face the same set of enemies over multiple Engagements or rounds, all Engagements/rounds against the same set of enemies are considered to be a single conflict. A conflict ends when the active area contains no enemies.

Dice Pool: The dice pool is the general supply of dice. It contains all dice that have not been committed, exhausted, or banished. Dice in the dice pool are available to be committed.

Returned: When a die is returned, it is moved from the active area back to the dice pool. This differs from recovered dice, which must come from the exhausted area.

ROLL DICE: Dice are rolled during the Roll Dice step, which is the second step of the Strategy phase. You roll all dice in your active area that are not already applied to cards. This includes dice still in your active area from previous Strategy phases that were not applied to cards, as well as all dice committed in the Commit Dice step, which happens just previous to the Roll Dice step.

UNIVERSAL HEROES

Some heroes are designated as **UNIVERSAL HEROES**, marked with the ✪ icon. These heroes can be used in any other ***20 Strong*** deck for a fun new gameplay experience.

Universal heroes maintain their specific properties and abilities even when ported

into a different deck, so familiarity with its native deck's rules is required.

The gameplay of 20 Strong varies significantly from deck to deck. Because of these differences, universal heroes may not always be as finely tuned to a deck's play style as the heroes designed for that deck. We encourage players to have fun with the universal heroes and discover the toughest or most rewarding pairings across the line!

CREDITS

PUBLISHERS

Adam Carlson & Josh Carlson

GAME DESIGN

Josh Carlson

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Chris Beck, Melonie Lavely, Bree Lindsoe, & Toujer Moua

RULEBOOK

Jeff Tidball & Shannon Wedge

PLAYTESTING & PROOFING

Michael Anderson, Trent Arney, Brian Baker, David Bernstein, Fix Bornes, Jade Bouldin, Jim Boyer, Felipe Bueno, Derrick Camardo, Jenelle Chu, Jeffrey Delbert, Jason W. Dragonfox, Andreas Giemza, Andrew S. Hall, Christoph Hoelzl, Jessica Jones, Derick Larson, Chris Latta, Guillaume Malenfant-Robichaud, David Moody, Greg Mullins, Pete Palena, Herbert Quain, Matías Ramírez Ramírez, José Ángel Fdez. Ramos, Colin Renkert,

Loïc Rüegg, Jonathan Sadler, Lars Sarbæk, Luke Seigars, Ryan Selvaggio, Daniel Shanks, Greg Spacek, Lindy Stewart, James Taylor, The Unbeatable, Harm Wieringa, Gregory Zilinskas

SPECIAL THANKS

Andrew Chesney, Andrew Dyrud, Amanda K. Gehrke, Logan Giannini, Angela Grandell, Jillian Green, Ryan Howard, Jessicca Johnson, Heather Kilber, Anthony LeTourneau, Stacey Poirier, Federico Pompili, Andrew Santoro, Salem Scott, Heather Swartz, Dustin Thornborrow, Brandon Wandersee, Josh Wielgus

CHIP THEORY GAMES

3500 Holly Lane N, Suite 65, Plymouth, MN 55447
chiptheorygames.com

ICONS

Each deck has its own additional icons, and may stylize the above icons to match the style of the deck.